

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of programming a FLASH memory device comprising:
issuing a blank check command to a command register within the FLASH memory device, wherein the blank check command specifies a specified block to blank check;
~~checking a signal level on a conductor coupled to the FLASH memory device to verify that the specified block is blank; and~~
~~checking a single bit in a status register within the FLASH memory device to determine if the FLASH memory device has verified that the specified block is blank; and~~
programming memory locations within the specified block of the FLASH memory device.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising checking a busy bit in the status register within the FLASH memory device adapted to signify that the ~~signal level on the conductor~~ single bit is valid.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein issuing a blank check command comprises:
issuing a blank check setup command; and
issuing a blank check confirm command.
4. (Canceled).
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising repeating the issuing, checking, and programming for more than one block in the memory device.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising repeating the issuing, checking, and programming for each block in the memory device.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of blank checking and programming a FLASH memory device comprising:

receiving a blank check command from a device external to the FLASH memory device, wherein the blank check command specifies a specified block to blank check;

in response to the blank check command received from a device external to the FLASH memory device, reading a plurality of memory locations in the specified block of the FLASH memory device; and

~~asserting a signal on a conductor coupled to the device external to the FLASH memory device to signify that the specified block is blank; and~~

setting a single bit in a status register within the FLASH memory device to signify that the specified block is blank, wherein the status register is visible to the device external to the FLASH memory device.

~~receiving data to be programmed in the specified block.~~

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein receiving a blank check command comprises:

receiving a blank check setup command; and

receiving a blank check confirm command.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7 wherein reading a plurality of memory locations comprises reading each memory location in the specified block.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 further comprising:

setting a busy bit adapted to signify the FLASH memory device is busy; and

clearing the busy bit after ~~asserting the signal on the conductor setting the single bit in the status register~~ to signify that the specified block is blank.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A memory device comprising:

 a FLASH memory core;

 a control block adapted to blank check a specified block of the FLASH memory core; and

 an external interface to allow communication between the control block and a device external to the memory device, the external interface including a command register to receive a blank check command that specifies the specified block, and the external interface including a status register having a bit to signify that the specified block is blank;

 wherein the control block is capable of blank checking the specified block of the FLASH memory core during a programming operation when the memory device is in use in a system, and wherein the control block is further capable of ~~asserting a signal on a conductor external to the memory device~~ setting the bit in the status register to signify that the specified block is blank.

14. (Currently Amended) The memory device of claim 13 wherein the ~~external interface~~ comprises a status register adapted to include a second bit to signify that the memory device is busy.

15. (Original) The memory device of claim 13 wherein the control block comprises a state machine.

16. (Original) The memory device of claim 13 wherein the control block comprises a microcontroller.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) An apparatus including a medium adapted to hold machine-accessible instructions that when accessed result in a machine performing:

 issuing a blank check command to a command register within a FLASH memory device, wherein the blank check command specifies a specified block to blank check;

~~checking a signal level on a conductor coupled to the FLASH memory device to verify that the specified block is blank; and~~

checking a single bit in a status register within the FLASH memory device to determine if the FLASH memory device has verified that the specified block is blank; and

programming memory locations within the specified block of the FLASH memory device verified as blank.

20. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 19 wherein the instructions, when accessed, further result in the machine performing:

checking a busy bit prior to checking the signal level on the conductor coupled to single bit in the status register within the FLASH memory.

21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 19 wherein issuing a blank check command comprises: issuing a blank check setup command; and issuing a blank check confirm command.

22. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 19 wherein the instructions, when accessed, further result in the machine performing:

issuing blank check commands and checking the signal level on the conductor single bit in the status register for more than one block in the memory device.

23. (Currently Amended) An electronic system comprising:
a direct conversion receiver;
a processor coupled to the direct conversion receiver; and
a memory device coupled to the processor, the memory device including a FLASH memory core, a control block adapted to blank check a specified block of the FLASH memory core, and an external interface to allow communication between the control block and the processor, the external interface including a command register to receive a blank check command that specifies the specified block, and the external interface including a status register having a bit to signify that the specified block is blank;

wherein the control block is capable of blank checking the specified block of the FLASH memory core during a programming operation by the processor, and wherein the control block is further capable of ~~asserting a signal on a conductor external to the memory device setting the bit in the status register~~ to signify that the specified block is blank.

24. (Original) The electronic system of claim 23 wherein the control block comprises a microcontroller.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) An electronic system comprising:
a direct conversion receiver;
a FLASH memory device;
a processor coupled to the direct conversion receiver and the FLASH memory device;
and

an article having a machine accessible medium holding instruction that when accessed result in the processor issuing a blank check command to a command register within the FLASH memory device wherein the blank check command specifies a specified block to blank check, ~~checking a signal level on a conductor coupled to the FLASH memory device to verify that the specified block is blank, checking a single bit in a status register within the FLASH memory device to determine if the FLASH memory device has verified that the specified block is blank;~~ and programming memory locations within the specified block of the FLASH memory device verified as blank.

27. (Original) The electronic system of claim 26 wherein issuing a blank check command comprises:

issuing a blank check setup command; and
issuing a blank check confirm command.

28. (Currently Amended) The electronic system of claim 26 wherein the instructions, when accessed, further result in the machine processor performing:

issuing blank check commands and checking the ~~signal level on the conductor~~ single bit in the status register for more than one block in the FLASH memory device.